

Message Text

SECRET

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20

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07

H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01

SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 IO-14 SCEM-02 INT-08

COME-00 EB-11 DRC-01 /186 W
----- 078645

R 260853Z NOV 73

FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0760

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

S E C R E T TRIPOLI 1469

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, LY, TS

SUBJECT: IMPRESSIONS RE QADHAFI GAINED BY HABIB BOURGUIBA, JR.

REF: TUNIS 6514

1. REGRET THAT WE CAN OFFER NO CONFIRMATION THAT
QADHAFI IS MELLOWING, CONTRARY TO THE IMPRESSION GAINED
BY HABIB BOURGUIBA, JR. (REFTEL).

2. QADHAFI'S WELL-EARNED REPUTATION FOR EXTREME
STATEMENTS CASTS A SHADOW BEFORE HIM. HAVING READ
THE HEADLINES HE MAKES, A PERSON TALKING TO HIM

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PRIVATELY MAY BE INTRIGUED TO FIND HE IS NOT FOAMING AT

THE MOUTH AND, IN FACT, LISTENS ATTENTIVELY AND FLASHES SMILES. UNFORTUNATELY, THIS DOES NOT KEEP HIM FROM MAKING FURTHER EXTREME STATEMENTS IN PUBLIC.

3. AT SOCIAL OCCASION NOV 24, I ASKED TUNISIAN AMBASSADOR FEZZANI WHETHER HE HAD DETECTED ANY RECENT SOFTENING OF QADHAFI'S ATTITUDE ON M.E. PROBLEM. WHEN FEZZANI EXPRESSED SURPRISE THAT I SHOULD ASK HIM, I REMARKED THAT HE HAD HAD A STREAM OF TUNISIAN MINISTERS HERE RECENTLY WHO MUST HAVE TRIED TO SPEAK TO QADHAFI ABOUT M.E. ISSUES. FEZZANI SAID THAT WAS TRUE, BUT THAT QADHAFI "ONLY LISTENED WITHOUT COMMITTING HIMSELF." (COMMENT: I SUSPECT THAT THIS IS WHAT HAPPENED TO HABIB BOURGUIBA, JR.)

4. RE OIL CUTBACKS AND BOYCOTTS, LARG PERFORMANCE SINCE OCT 6 HAS BEEN A BIT ERRATIC, BUT WE DOUBT IT WOULD GO SO FAR AS TO FAVOR AN EARLY EASING OF OIL WARFARE AGAINST U.S. BELIEVE LARG'S INITIAL AND LATER WOBBLING NOT DUE TO ANY SOFTNESS TOWARD U.S. BUT TO FACT THAT A) AS USUAL LARG DECIDES INDEPENDENTLY OF OPEC (AND OPEC) JUST WHAT OIL MEASURES IT TAKES, EVEN THOUGH THEY TURN OUT TO BE BASICALLY PARALLEL; B) CONTEMPORANEOUSLY LARG HAS BEEN TRYING TO BOOST ITS NATIONAL OIL COMPANY (NOC) INTO A COMMANDING POSITION OVER WHOLE OIL INDUSTRY HERE, AND C) LIBYANS WILL NEVER DELIBERATELY LOSE MONEY IF THEY CAN HELP IT, DESPITE QADHAFI'S RHETORIC TO CONTRARY; CURRENT OIL WARFARE DOES NOT COST THE LARG ANYTHING IF THEY TEMPORARILY TURN A BLIND EYE TO CERTAIN NOC AND OTHER SHIPMENTS TO THE CARIBBEAN.

5. IN OTHER WORDS, WE SEE NO POLITICAL OR ECONOMIC MOTE QADHAFI MIGHT HAVE TO FAVOR AN EASING OF HIS BOYCOTT OF DIRECT SHIPMENTS TO THE U.S.
JOSIF

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PETROLEUM, PETROLEUM INDUSTRY, BOYCOTTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 NOV 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973TRIPOL01469
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: TRIPOLI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731112/aaaaaiql.tel
Line Count: 96
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: TUNIS 6514
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 DEC 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <05-Dec-2001 by shawdg>; APPROVED <10-Dec-2001 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: IMPRESSIONS RE QADHAFI GAINED BY HABIB BOURGUIBA, JR.
TAGS: PFOR, LY, TS, (BOURGUIBA, HABIB JR), (QADHAFI, MUAMMAR)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005